HARD CASE

ISSUE ONE

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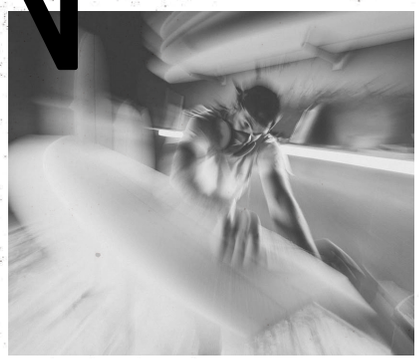
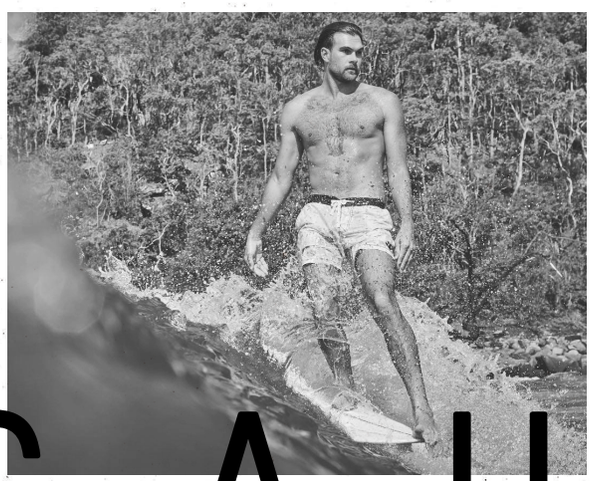
IMG.1

FAR EAST NZ PHOTO ESSAY

IMG.(1) Kawakawa Early Spring.
IMG.(2) Jesse Emery Throwing Buckets.

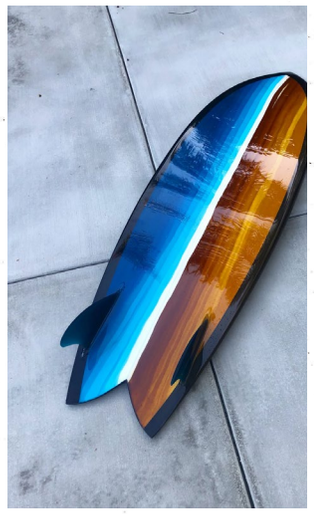
EDEN SAUL





Dead Kooks started almost by chance. Fresh out of school, Eden Saul had a pile of broken boards in his yard when a friend spray-painted “Dead Kooks” on one. Soon after, a homemade lam with the same name found its way onto the boards Saul was shaping, and the name stuck. Today, Dead Kooks surfboards are known for their functional designs and bold, distinctive aesthetics. Eden shapes every board himself, working closely with some of the best glass-shops worldwide. While he focuses on custom builds tailored to individual surfers, he also produces limited runs of refined models developed through years of experimentation and feedback from elite surfers he’s fortunate to work with. Splitting time between Byron Bay and Venice Beach, with shaping stints in Hawaii, Japan, Bali and France, Saul has built a global practice. His travels not only inform his designs but also connect him with world-class craftsmen. After more than a decade, his curiosity and drive to evolve the craft remain stronger than ever.

DEADK-OOKS



Eden Saul began Dead Kooks surfboards in his early twenties, when life looked very different. “I was studying law and racing triathlon and lifeguarding to make a crust. I was deep into riding fishes and longboards and it was a pretty small quirky scene at that time. The boards I was into weren’t super easy to come by and I was messing around making some pretty fucking terrible versions of what I was trying to find, and eventually that kind of just got a run on.” His early shaping influences came from a mix of mentors and inspirations. “Dick Van Straalen was getting me some insane boards when I was in my early teens. That really got me started. My first job in a shop was with Darcy Surfboards and Stu was a big help in getting me going on this path. As far as surfers, guys like Devon Howard and Tyler Hatziken, the boys at Sea Surfboards, what they were doing, and Chris Christensen is a big inspiration.”

When it comes to shaping, Eden keeps his philosophy simple. “I just try to make what I want to ride. I try not to over complicate the designs, let the board get out of the way, lots of speed and ease. Once you’ve got that speed then being able to harness it and put it to effective use.” Asked about which boards he enjoys shaping most, he reckons it depends on the conditions. “It changes on the day. Just depends what I’ve been surfing and the waves. We’ve got a pretty epic array of waves right by my house, right now it’s been a yin yang and these new 10’ longboards I’ve been playing around with.”

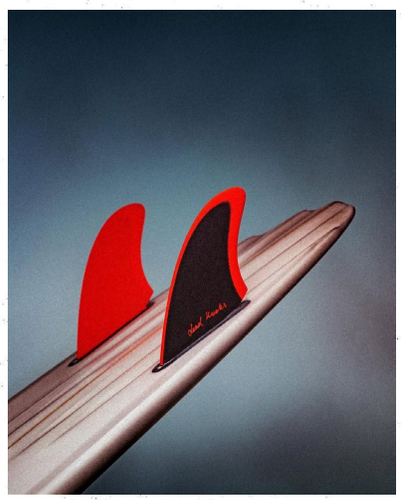
Dead Kooks boards have become known not only for their shapes but also for their striking glass jobs. “They were like that since the start, just evolved a long way. I think surfboards are pretty damn beautiful things. It’s fun dressing them up and adding some colour and flair. I don’t see why they can’t be these beautiful

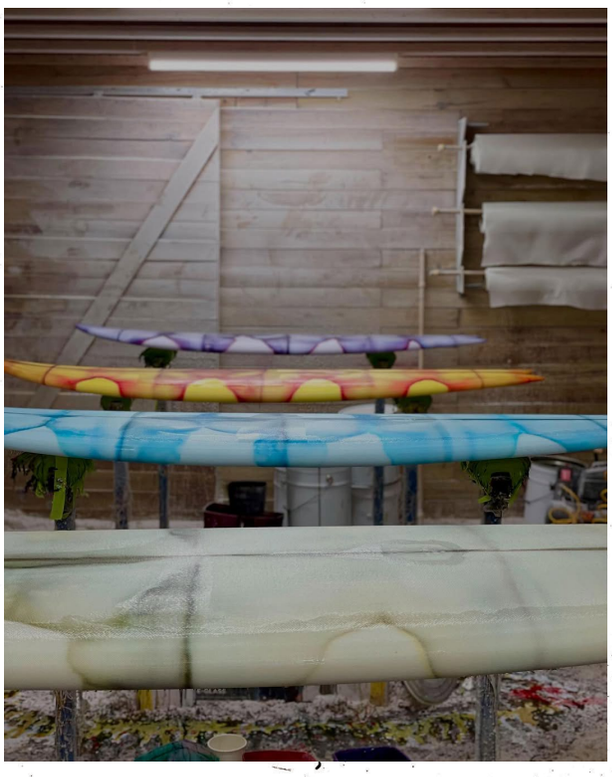
@ deadkooks
deadkooks.com

Left over page: ES 9’6 Nuasea photo by kanes kennar. ES finishing up a 10’6 triple stick shot by nathan oldfield. ES adventures south of the boarder. Cornholio speedrun shot by nathan oldfield for tcss.
Left to Right: Summertime in the southwest with Victoria Vergara shot by @theamyst. Ying Yang Twins. 5’3 Riches TW. Fish Stock. Autumn mornings, Dave, 6’5 Yin Yang shot by nathan oldfield. Custom templates. Glassing production.

unique objects.” On the artistic side, collaboration has been key. “I mostly work with Mark Cormac, Madhouse Glassing. We’ve been working together for 10 years or so. He’s amazing with what he does. I’ve worked with numerous brands and artists over the years on some killer projects but for the most part it’s just Mark and myself.” As for inspiration, Eden says it’s impossible to pin down. “That’s such a wide ranging pool.”

Looking at the surf industry today, he sees space for creativity. “I think there is plenty of room, surfboards are so wide and varied, to match the users and changing faces of the ocean and what she delivers up. I think people are more open now than they were 15 years ago for sure and that’s cool, but I liked it when the pass wasn’t so busy also. I think we are in a good place with it at the moment.”





IMG . (3) 90's Sheet Glass.

IMG.3

NZ/AU

PAU

MCN

HARD CASE

L

Paul McNeil is a New Zealand born, Byron Bay based artist whose bold, witty style has shaped surf, skate, music, and graphic design culture for over four decades. Rising to prominence through his work with iconic surf brand Mambo, McNeil has since created everything from surfboards and skateboards to album covers, murals, children's books, and international exhibitions. A co-founder of Sea Surfboards and later The Art Park, he has continually blurred the lines between art, music, and surf culture. Known for his playful use of words and imagery, punk-rock ethos, and off-the-cuff process, McNeil remains a central figure in alternative art and surf communities worldwide.

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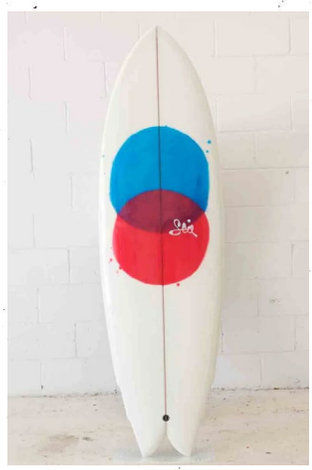
E I L

PAUL

MCNEIL



Left over page: Sea surfboards, Hot resin on log. Left to Right: SURFBOARD, 2010, Paul McNeil resin art over Ari Marcopoulos photograph on Dain Thomas surfboard, Sea Surfboards, Evolve Today, I Cant Wait For Summer To End, Paul & Board. All images by Paul Mcneil.

Paul McNeil laughs when asked the simple question; who is Paul McNeil? “I’m still finding out,” he admits. “I think I’m about 30 years away from the answer to that.” What’s clear, though, is that McNeil has carved out a life where art, design, surfing, and music fold into one another. A graphic designer by trade, he sees no divide between disciplines. “They are both intertwined in my mind. There is art in everything if you look for it. My work has a lot of design or graphic elements to it as I’ve been a graphic designer all my life.”

Paul calls himself “alternative everything,” a mindset born from growing up in an isolated New Zealand and discovering punk rock as a teenager. “Punk rock taught us all to do things on your own terms because no one else was going to do it for you. Extremely liberating - and an ethos I still live by.” That spirit spills into his body of work, which he compares to a record album: different songs made with the same instruments. “My favourite songs have soul in one form or another. My life is music and surf and friends and simple good times. I try to weave that into my art.”

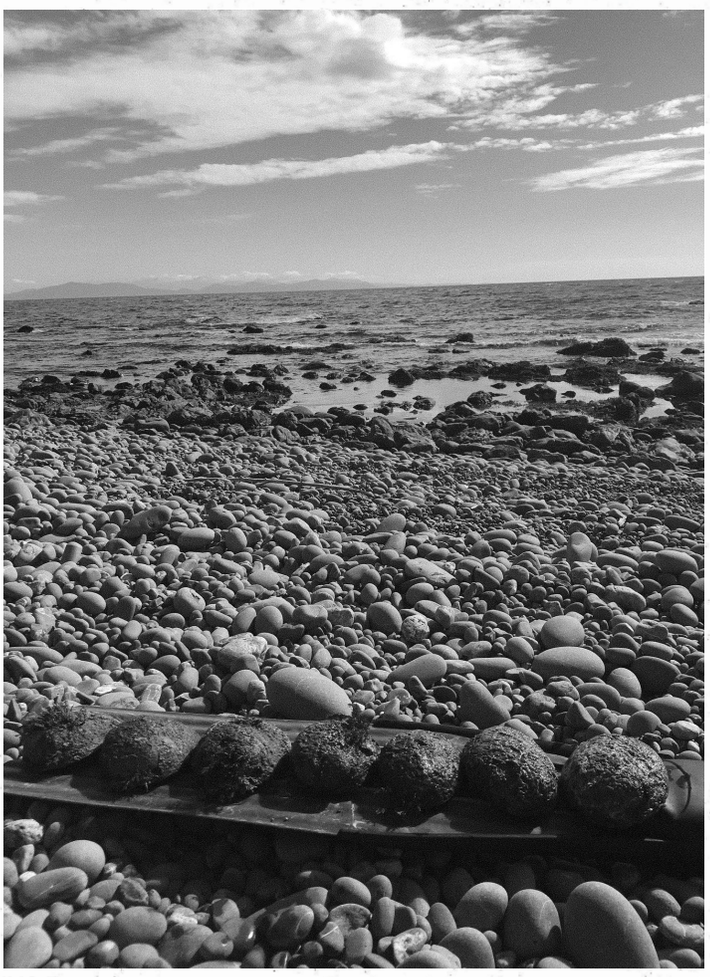
Variations are part of his rhythm. He often revisits the same imagery in different scales or materials. “I’m used to seeing my graphic work reproduced hundreds of times, so just doing ‘one’ painting is perhaps not enough. I like to do variations on the theme. Also, I do so many paintings it’s kinda hard to come up with hundreds of new ideas.” When beginning a new piece, Paul treats it like a song. “I sometimes have some words and add a picture; or sometimes the other way around. It’s a fun part of my art. I realised that people can take the simplest sentence very seriously if it’s in the context of ‘art.’”

His projects have always blurred boundaries. In Byron Bay, he became involved with Dain Thomas and Matt Yeates at Sea Surfboards, where boards, art, and music collided. “We turned Sea Surfboards into a great and somewhat influential scene out here in Australia. We were probably ahead of our time, but you get that... I look back on those days very fondly. We had a gallery space full of beautiful boards and art and music. It was the cool scene. It’s a shame it all came to an end.” For those wondering: yes, he’d gladly buy a Sea board back if one surfaces. The boards themselves were artworks in process as much as in outcome. “Some were conventionally painted but mainly I did the art with hot resin. It’s pretty difficult and fast, the resin goes hard in just a few minutes. It takes a lot of concentration and some helping hands.”

That experimental, collaborative energy later flowed into The Art Park, which McNeil co-founded with Craig Rochfort in Byron Bay. “We wanted to introduce some more culture to our world. We had a gallery space for a few years showing some amazing artists; Joni Sternbach, Rhys Lee, Thomas Campbell and so many others. We ran an artist residency and published a few art journals. All the things I love doing! Really it was an extension of Sea Surfboards (but without surfboards).”

For Paul, it all comes back to the alternative. “Yeah, my life is about the alternative art culture and trying to change a few people’s lives by exposing them to it.” And when it comes to mainstream surf culture? He doesn’t mince words. “It’s boring—but hey, so is mainstream ‘culture’. I live in possibly the most diverse surf town in the world. We have lots of pro surfers here and we have lots of free surfers here. I look forward to the day surfing has all its different factions and everyone is happy to let everyone catch a wave however they choose to.”

IMG.4



IMG.5

IMG.(4) B.R.O & Ahi.
IMG.(5) Paua.
IMG.(6) Jesse Emery Frontside Hack.
IMG.(7) Fresh Spring Over Glow Worms.
IMG.(8) Off Shores Holding the Left Hander.

IMG.6

IMG.7

IMG.8

NZ/AU

JIM

Jim Mitchell was born and raised in Murapara then Kawerau in New Zealand before moving to Wellington to study art. After studies Jim travelled to Australia to work as a freelance illustrator in advertising, editorial, publishing and animation and never left. Jim arrived at Mambo in 1990 and remained a major contributor up to 2003 when he left to lay the foundations for his own surf label, The Critical Slide Society. After 40 years working away in the surf industry, Jim has returned home to Aotearoa where he continues to make art.

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MITCH-ELL

HARD CASE

Jim Mitchell describes working with Mambo during its heyday as "being part of a creative revolution." The brand, which launched in 1984 with nothing more than a beach umbrella in a Redfern beer garden, went on to create something completely new in the surf world. "Mambo built its foundations on an irreverent combination of art, humour, music and surf; something that had never been attempted before. They called themselves the 'bastard children of surf culture,' and that attitude permeated everything we did." He recalls how Mambo carved out its own path with a unique formula. "From Richard Allan's infamous dog print to Reg Mombassa's 'Australian Jesus' Hawaiian shirt, Mambo tackled racism, jingoism and commercialism - and even poked fun at the very subculture they were supposedly targeting. We weren't trying to fit into the established surf industry; we were actively disrupting it with art that was provocative, intelligent, and unapologetically Australian." Looking at surf art today, Jim sees Mambo's influence everywhere. "The brand proved that surf culture could be a legitimate vehicle for serious artistic expression while still maintaining its irreverent spirit. You can see that legacy in contemporary surf art; there's more willingness to tackle complex themes, more sophisticated visual language, and definitely more humour and subversion than there was before Mambo came along."

Jim has always been drawn to unconventional surfaces. "It started with crab shells; there was something irresistible about taking these delicate, organic forms and painting completely incongruous subject matter on them, like Australian muscle cars. The contrast was everything: the raw power of a Holden Monaro rendered on something as fragile and coastal as a crab shell." Inspiration also came from the resourcefulness of sailors carving scrimshaw, or convicts making artworks out of scraps. "That spirit of making do, of transforming the mundane into something meaningful, really speaks to me."

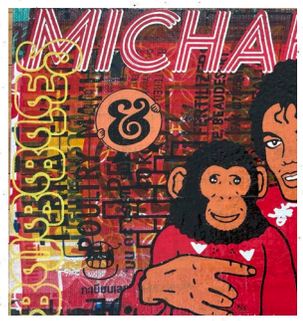
But for Jim, it was never just about the material. "The real breakthrough was realising that the subject matter could be just as incongruous as the surface itself. Why paint seascapes on shells when you could paint V8 engines? Why stick to what's expected

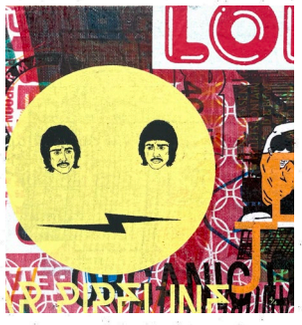
when you can push boundaries and make people do a double-take?" This approach later expanded into painting on woven plastic food bags. "There's something beautiful about elevating these throwaway materials that are usually destined for landfill. Each surface presents its own technical challenges too. How do you get paint to adhere to plastic? How do you work with the natural curves of a shell? These practical problems become part of the creative process."

His practice spans a wide range of mediums, but the approach always shifts depending on the project. "Whether I'm creating commissioned art for apparel, a painting for a gallery show, or a screen print design, the brief dictates the approach. Every job demands its own visual language and technique." For apparel, Mitchell considers how designs sit on fabric or work within limited colours, while gallery pieces allow "more complex compositions and the luxury of unlimited color and detail." Each medium alters the message. "A screen print forces you to think graphically; bold, simplified forms that read clearly. But when I'm painting on one of those crab shells, suddenly I'm working with curves and natural textures that suggest entirely different possibilities." What ties it all together, he says, is "this underlying approach of finding the unexpected angle... that core idea of challenging assumptions - that stays constant."

Jim's time in Indonesia also shifted his perspective. "Indonesia completely opened up my practice in ways I never expected. I was there overseeing production for The Critical Slide Society, but what started as a business necessity became this incredible artistic opportunity." Having access to local craftspeople; "screen printers, woodworkers, spray painters" - was like gaining entry to "a massive creative workshop that would have been unheard of and prohibitively expensive back in Australia."

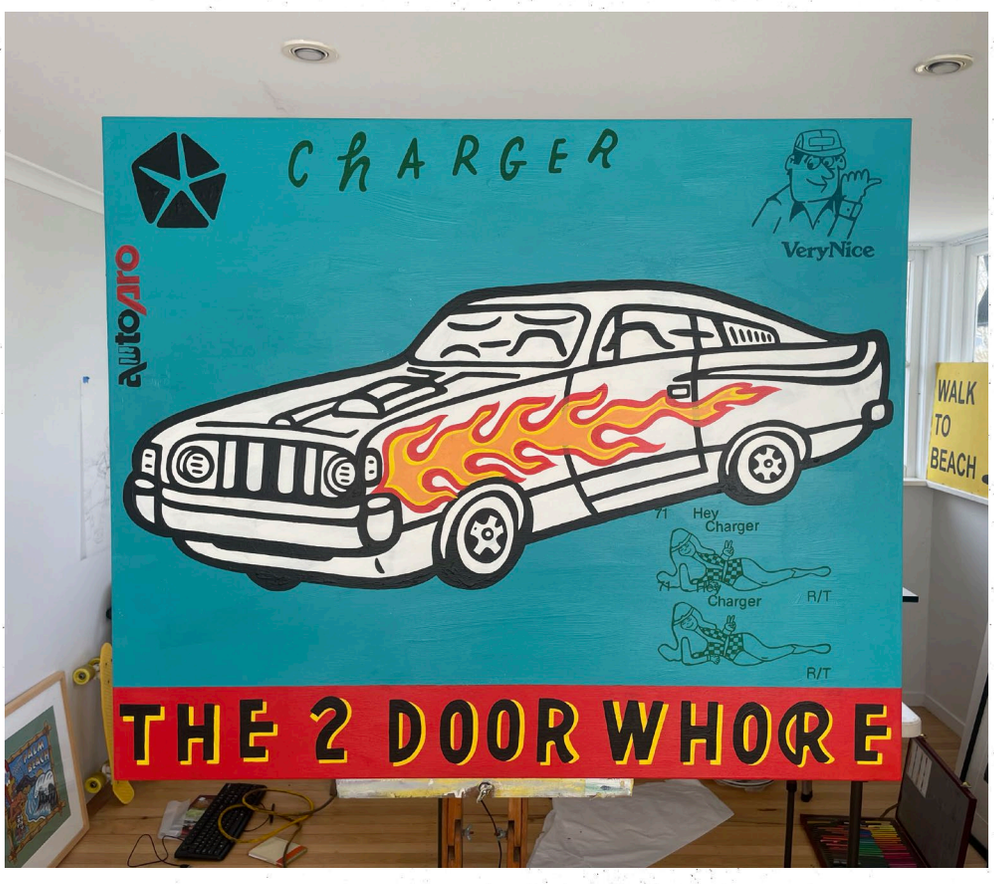
What struck him most was the culture itself. "People are constantly making do, repurposing materials, finding creative solutions with whatever's at hand. It reminded me of those convict artists I've always admired, but with this vibrant, tropical energy that was completely infectious." "Working alongside local artisans broke down this Western idea of the solitary artist creating in isolation. These craftspeople had generations of knowledge... they'd suggest approaches I'd never considered, or show me how to achieve effects that would have taken me years to figure out on my own." For Mitchell, that experience reinforced a belief he already held: "the best art often comes from pushing outside your comfort zone and embracing the unexpected."





Left over page: JM nose ride shot by Hugh Mcloud, JM & Salty shot by Nathalie Krag, Boyd Dunlop Gallery.
Left to Right- Shibuya Meltdown, Big Surf 2024, XC Beast, Aloha Bowie, Donald Takayama acrylic on paper 2005, Sam Halk acrylic on paper 2005, Charger 2017.

FORD
Cobra
Cobra
Cobra
Mitchell
2025


CHARGER
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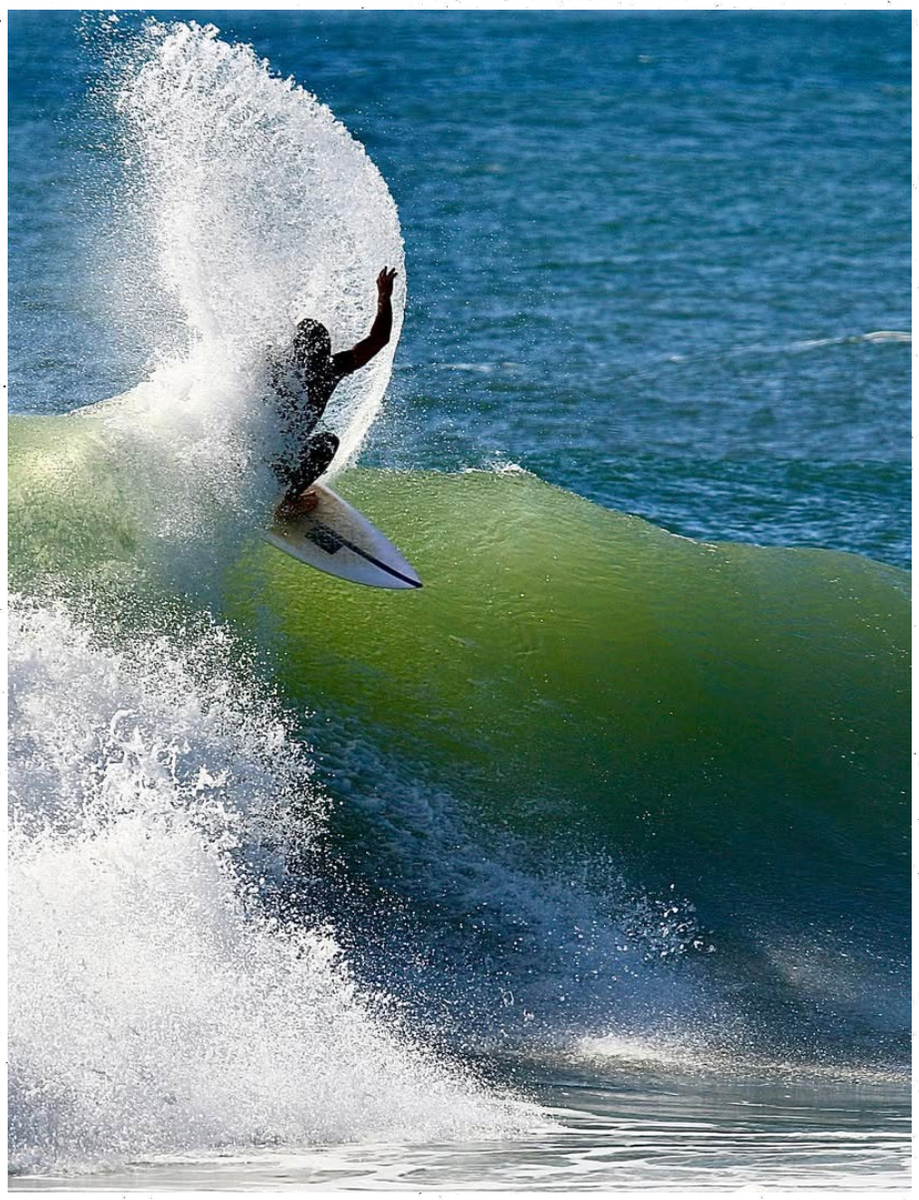
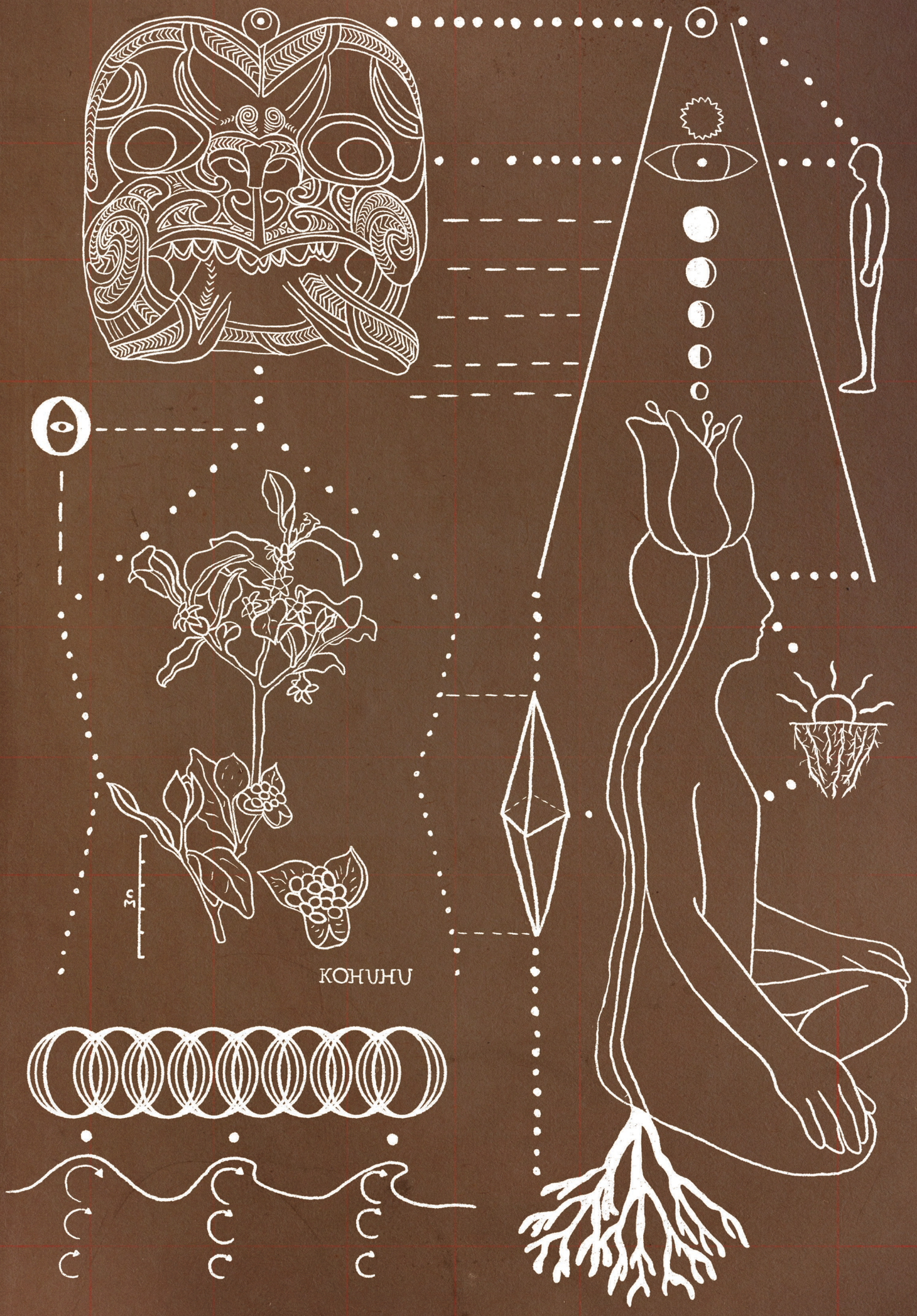
Mitchell .05



IMG.9

IMG.(9) B.R.O Summer Swell.


3cm
KOHUHU

IMG.(10) Mr Whippy & Tino Rangatiratanga.
IMG.(11) Toi & Raglan On the Search .
IMG.(12) Beaked Whale Near the Point.
IMG.(13) Tahi Goddard Mechanical Right.
IMG.(14) Basket Fungis Side.
IMG.(15) Basket Fungis Top.

IMG.12 IMG.13

IMG.14 IMG.15

NZ/AU

Ryan Glover Creator of Big Sun; a surfboard and surf essentials studio based out of Mt Maunganui, New Zealand. Shop online or in person at their shaping bay/ showroom by appointment. His surfboards are made locally and are of highest quality, refinement and finishing. The surf essentials are sourced internationally from the best brands. He is deeply influenced by the rich culture of our surfing history. Big Sun draws inspiration from multiple surfing epochs, ultimately celebrating a wider surfing experience. Surfing is a constant source of stoke and inspiration in big, small, rain, hail or shine.

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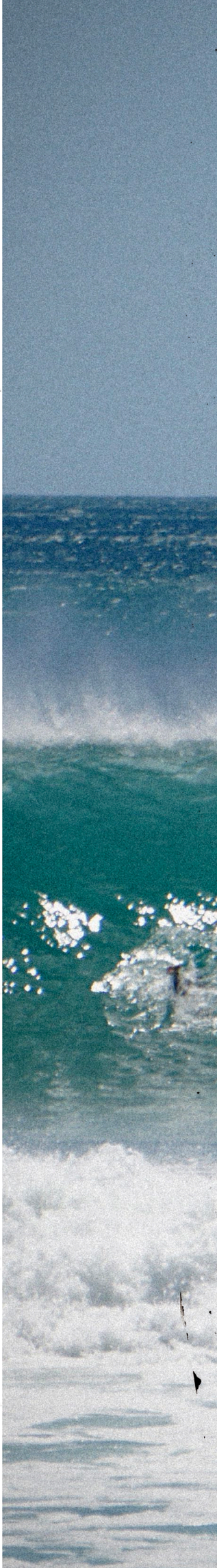
R Y A O V E

HARD



RYAN GLOVER

Ryan Glover is a writer and surfboard shaper from Mount Maunganui, New Zealand, whose work is rooted in surfing culture, community, and the shifting landscapes of time and space. His first novel, Hamburger Hill, captures a moment just before the digital age took hold; a portrait of youth in the era before smartphones, when technology was still a novelty rather than a necessity. "I grew up right when culture was speeding up," Ryan says. "Home computers, the internet, the dawn of the digital age - it all evolved from sci-fi to reality in real time. Mobile phones didn't arrive until I was 17, and even then they were bricks. You hardly used them because a single text cost money. They were a choice, not a necessity. My teenage years were completely different to those just a year or two younger, and when I realised how much that shift was going to change everything, I wanted to capture a snapshot of the world just before it happened."

For Ryan, Hamburger Hill is a book about more than just adolescence; it's about surf culture, belonging, and the bonds formed on the margins. "It's about youth, hope, expectation, rites of passage, and our connection to the ocean before cam subscriptions and 14-day weather forecasts. Back then surfing was for bums. Teachers didn't like us, or at least that's how it felt. But that made the friendships stronger. Surfing was what we did, our thing, and it created a community with its own social etiquette and rites of passage. We were outsiders, but that was part of the meaning. You did it because you loved it."

That same sense of culture and experimentation drives his work with Big Sun, the surfboard and lifestyle brand he founded to explore New Zealand's rich surfing history. His boards, bold in both colour and form, draw inspiration from multiple surfing epochs, often revisiting ideas abandoned or overlooked. "I've always been inspired by the past. It's easier to know where you're going if you understand what's already been tried. Most design elements have been explored before, but sometimes a generation dismissed something for the wrong reasons; poor execution,

different goals, or assumptions. I like rediscovering those things. It's like searching an old mine shaft and finding a vein someone missed."

For Glover, shaping is first and foremost craftsmanship, a balance of science and art. "I have a joke that shaping is a science and glassing is an art. Science is controlled, art leans on intuition and happy mistakes. Because I work on boards from start to finish, I see it all as craftsmanship - many parts that make up a whole. It's always about the surfing in the end, the feel of a board, how it works in different conditions. Especially on the East Coast of New Zealand, where you need to make the most of what you get. Each design is highly calibrated towards a goal, then we surf, test, refine, and repeat. Sometimes things don't work, but that's fine with me. The creative process is a journey, not a destination, an ongoing experiment."

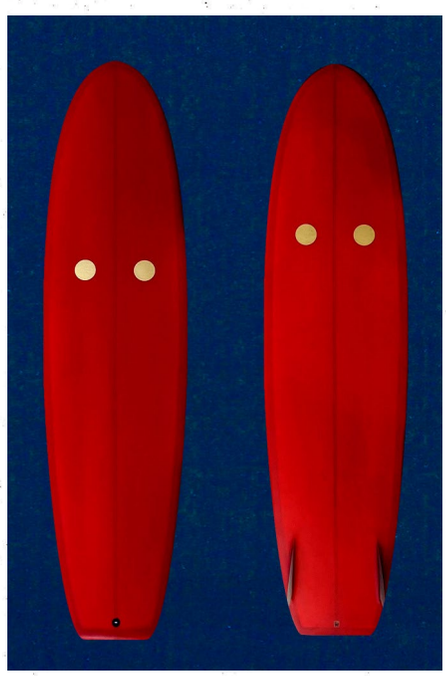
His boards are also instantly recognisable for their striking use of colour. While inspired by Josef Albers' square series, his biggest breakthrough came from photographer William Eggleston, whose colour work at MoMA pushed Glover into the world of colour theory. "Studying Eggleston sent me down a rabbit hole. But the real shift happened when I started working with real pigment and mixing my own colours. The more I worked with colour, the more the language opened up to me. It's something I'm still exploring."

Through words or surfboards, Ryan Glover's work is about capturing moments, experimenting with form, and celebrating surfing as a culture of connection and creativity. His novel Hamburger Hill is available in paperback at www.bigsun.nz and as an ebook on Kindle and Apple iBooks, while Big Sun surfboards and essentials can also be found via the website.

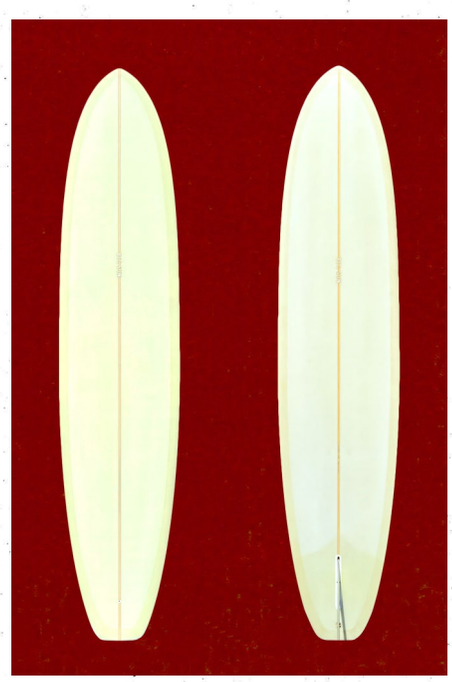
Left over page: RG in G-Land on the Island Twin, RG right down the line; photo by Rory Priest, RG well salted; photo by Ngaire Jean. Left to Right: Hamburger Hill, Big Sun Boards; Photos by Ryan Glover, RG Big Sun Shaping Bay; photo by Marianna Jakubiková

MAUNGANUI CHIP
9'2 x 23' x 3' II/2021
JOE QUIGG EXPERIMENTAL
ASYMMETRIC TAIL NATURAL
BIG SUN

BIG SUN



BIG SUN



IMG.16

IMG.17

IMG.18

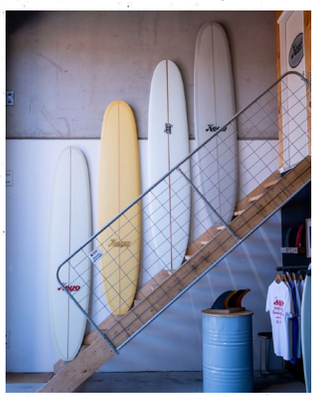
IMG.19

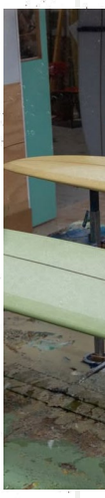
JOHNNY G

Johnny Gill grew up in Avalon Beach, a small surf town on Sydney's Northern Beaches, where he spent most of his life in the water. After years of surfing at a high level, he shifted his focus in 1995, turning his experience and knowledge into surfboard shaping. Johnny married Vanessa Keogh, daughter of Denny Keogh; founder of the iconic Keyo Surfboards and has since taken the reins, carrying forward the legacy of the brand. Today, Keyo operates from the Central Coast, just north of Sydney, where Johnny and his team craft boards from start to finish with the same pride and attention to detail that has defined the label for decades.

@ keyointl
www.keyointernational.com

I L L





Johnny Gill from Keyo approaches shaping with the surfer at the center of his process. “My design process always starts with the individual and what waves they plan to surf,” he explains. “This usually involves a lengthy chat and often a glimpse of what boards they have liked in the past.” That focus on the person riding the board runs through everything he does at Keyo.

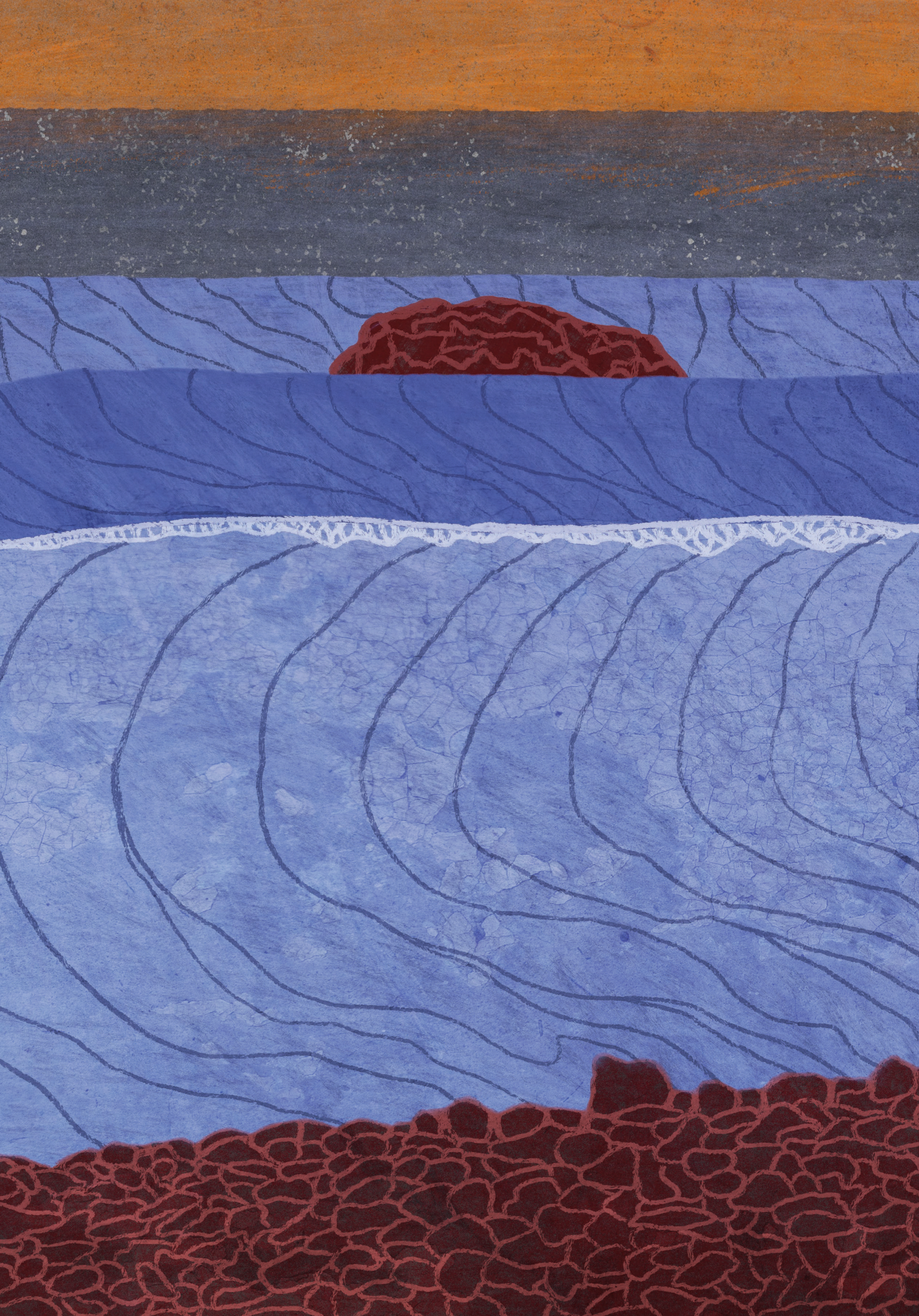
When asked about breakthroughs, Johnny keeps things grounded. “We are always trying to make the best board possible. I quite often use feedback from our team riders to tweak existing designs to make them better.” For him, it’s not about reinventing the wheel, it’s about refining proven ideas and making them sing for the surfer.

Colour and finishing touches also stay close to home. “We do all our production under one roof and handled by our team at Keyo HQ,” he says. “We welcome any artist that would like to collab with us.” That openness means each board can carry its own story while still being a true Keyo product.

Inspiration, meanwhile, comes from looking backwards as much as forward. “A lot of our inspiration is taken from looking back in time,” Johnny says. “Taking shapes from golden eras and putting a modern twist to them.” It’s this blend of history and innovation that keeps Keyo’s boards feeling timeless yet progressive.

When it comes to dream projects, Johnny doesn’t hesitate. “I would have loved to have made a long board for Joel Tudor and a Twin fin for Derek Hynd in his day. Both these guys are influences to the boards I make today.”

Left over page: Japanese Quartet, JG & ProMalley & Beer Stained Keyo Classic Fin
Left to Right: Double Twin Trouble, Keyo HQ, Moving Through the Shop Orders, Surfer Jack Norton Shot by Millicent Ward, Willow Sliding Through the Silence NZ, Afternoon Delights, New Feelings.



IMG.20

IMG.21

IMG.24

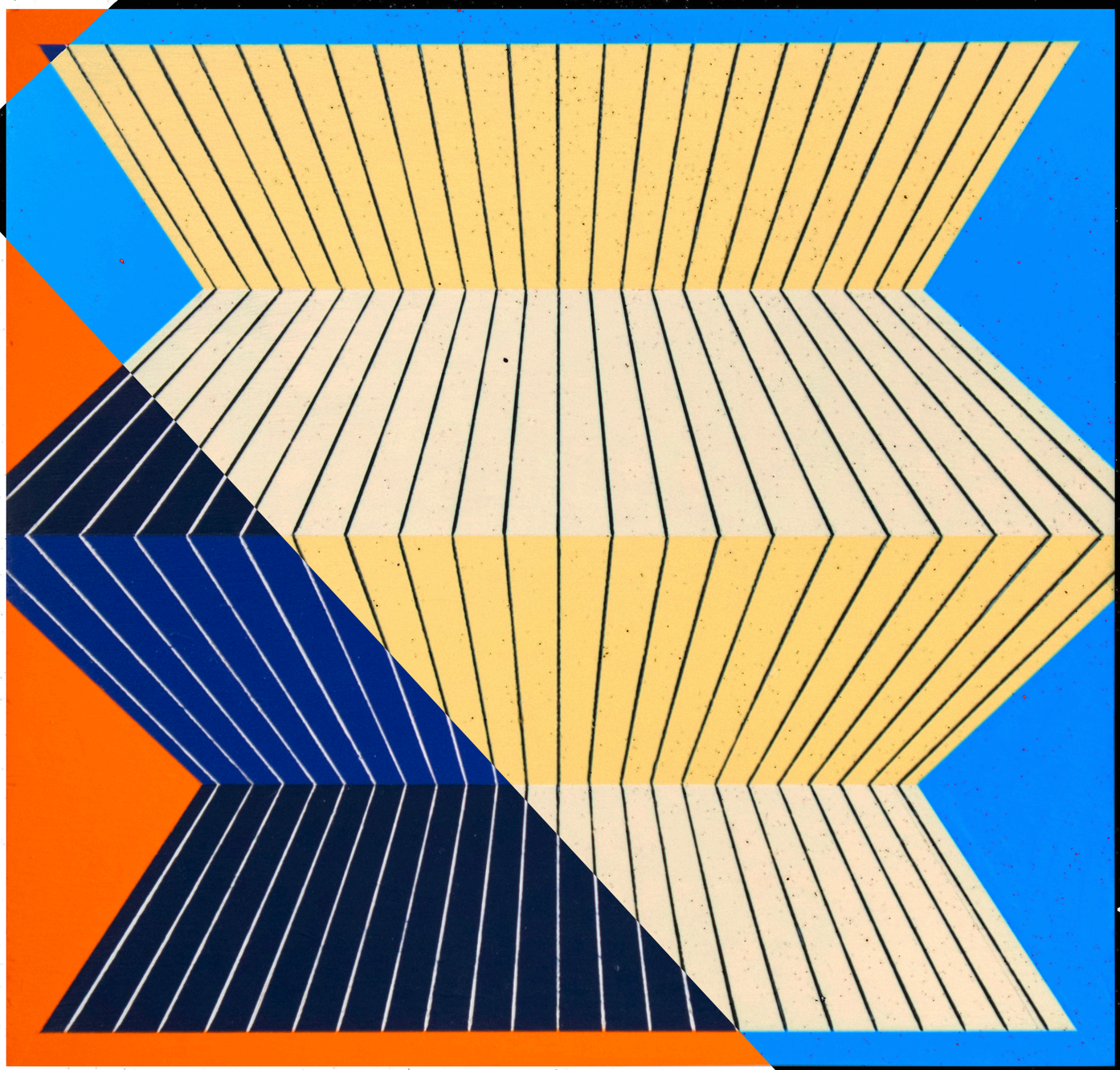
IMG.(16) Spinifex & Pingao.
IMG.(17) Jesse Emery Slashing the Roller.
IMG.(18) Checking the Beachy.
IMG.(19) Tahi Finding Some Shade.
IMG.(20) Tropics NZ.
IMG.(21) Few Panny's & Sushimi For Tea.
IMG.(22) Over the Back Finding No Sign.
IMG.(23) Dreamy Peak Providing.
IMG.(24) Pest Control While the Wind Turns Onshore.

IMG.22

IMG.23

NZ/AU

K A S P



Kasper Raglus' own special brand of contemporary geometric abstraction has few peers in the Australian art world. A long-time resident and explorer of Victoria's famed Surf Coast, Raglus' nuanced blending of minimalism, geometry, hard edge conventions and painterly detailing produces bold and intricate explorations of his own natural and cultural environments – layered material notations, pigmented records and maps of worlds both internal and external, familial and personal.

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KASPER

RAGLUS

AGLUS

Kasper Raglus's work strikes a rare balance: geometric and precise yet undeniably organic, even spiritual. "I like to put effort into making the paintings as neat and crisp as possible," he explains, "but since they are hand painted with acrylic and oil on hardwood ply, they always have an organic touch, which I think really adds to a handmade feel." Music is a major influence, shaping not only the rhythm of his forms but the colour combinations that carry emotion. "Every time I start a new painting, I try to draw the first inspiration from a really stripped-back view of life, love, and death, rather than zeroing in on a specific theme. I believe these elements of my work add a spiritual feeling."

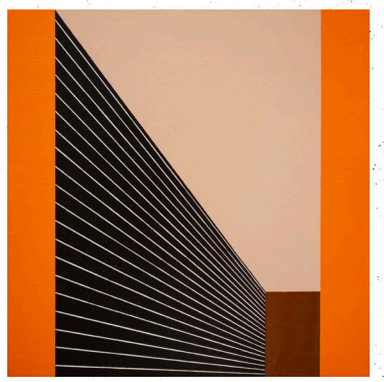
For Kasper, shapes are fluid in meaning. "I like that the shapes can represent almost anything and nothing at the same time," he says. "Sometimes they mirror the balance of life; different elements converging into harmony, but above all they capture feeling through colour and space." His process reflects this mix of openness and intention: "It's a combination of sketching out ideas, looking at art books and images online for inspiration, but mostly my ideas are rough and quick. Some of my best paintings I think of while working on another painting; I have to stop what I'm doing and get to work on that idea without even sketching. The faster I can start the actual painting from the idea in my head, the closer the finished painting will be to what I imagined. It's usually an idea of combining colours, then it's just a matter of how to make them balanced."

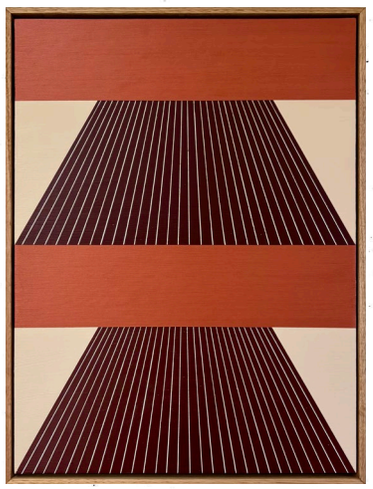
Colour is central to his practice, both playful and meditative in its effect. "I like to search for colours that make me feel something new. I think colour has the power to do that. I've always been obsessed with colour combinations - if something stands out to me in my day-to-day life, I'll try to remember how it made me feel and then use that in my next piece. Over the years I've developed my own process and tricks to create colours that feel new to me, and I think I'll always be mixing paint until I'm literally too old to hold a brush." His choices are guided by both excitement and challenge: "It's usually a mix of using colours I've never put together before and something that makes me feel excited. Although the work has stayed in the same abstract theme my whole career, I want to keep pushing and discovering new things as time goes by.

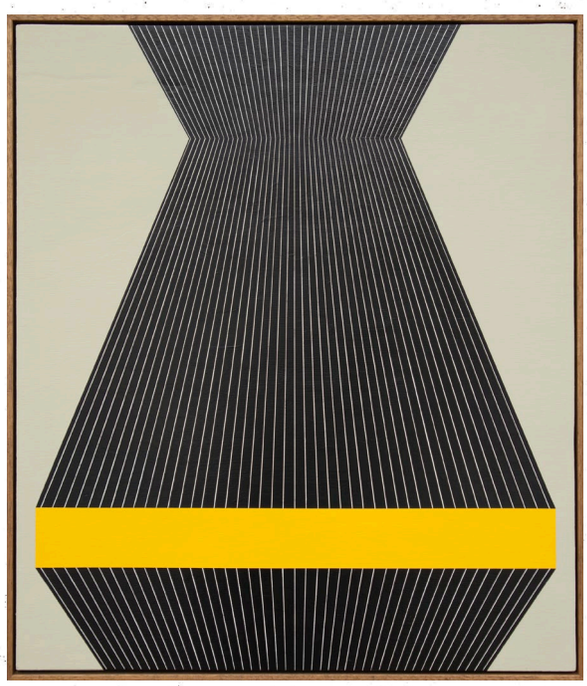
While surfing is a huge part of Raglus's life, his creative spark tends to come from elsewhere. "The inspiration mostly comes from design and architecture for sure. I love surfing so much and have dedicated my life to it in a lot of ways, but I've been around surfing so much for over 20 years. When I travel to a new city and look at art galleries or meet new people from different places; that really inspires me and makes me grow as a person, and eventually it brings new ideas into my work."

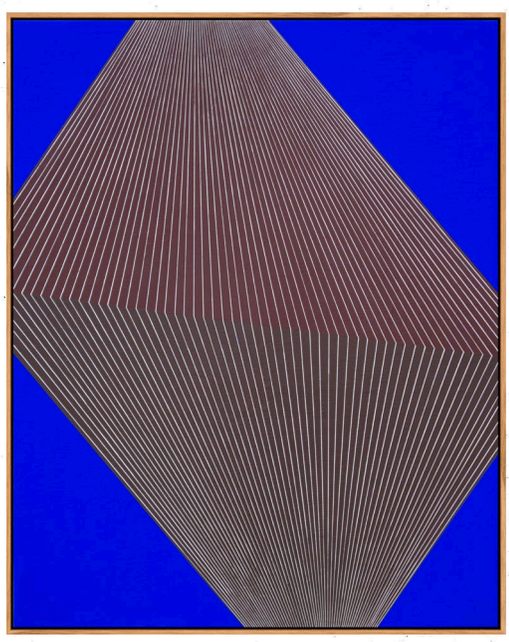
Looking ahead, Raglus is preparing to shift his practice into new territory. "My next show later this year is going to be a 3D version of the paintings I've been making over the last couple of years. The work is all made from plywood that I cut with a drop saw and glue together; it's a lot of work before you even start to put paint down. But it's keeping me excited and feeling nervous about whether people will even like the finished product. I've learnt over the years that it's a good way to feel as an artist - if you're not pushing yourself in new directions, things can get stale and you end up repeating yourself."

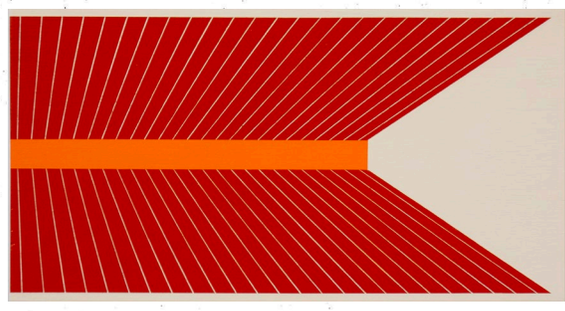
Left over page: Wind Shift, Waken
Above- Raglus studio, Kasper & Royal.
Left- Raglus studio, Align, Journey, Echo,
Bottom turn, Bending, Boards, Rivermouth, Crave.
All images by Kasper Raglus.

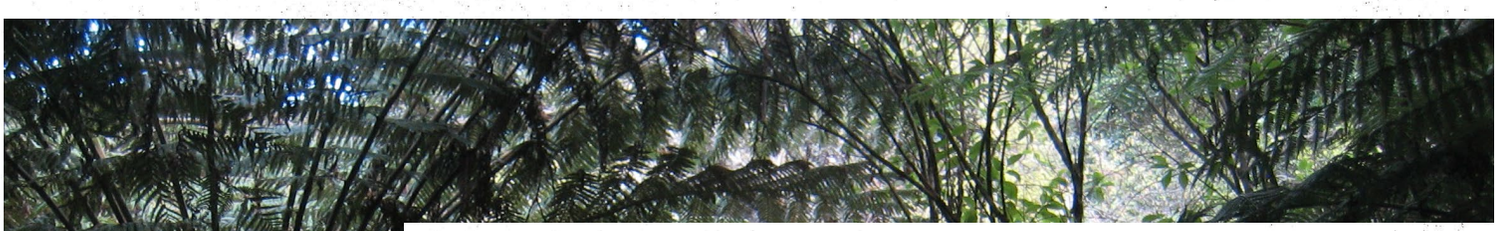








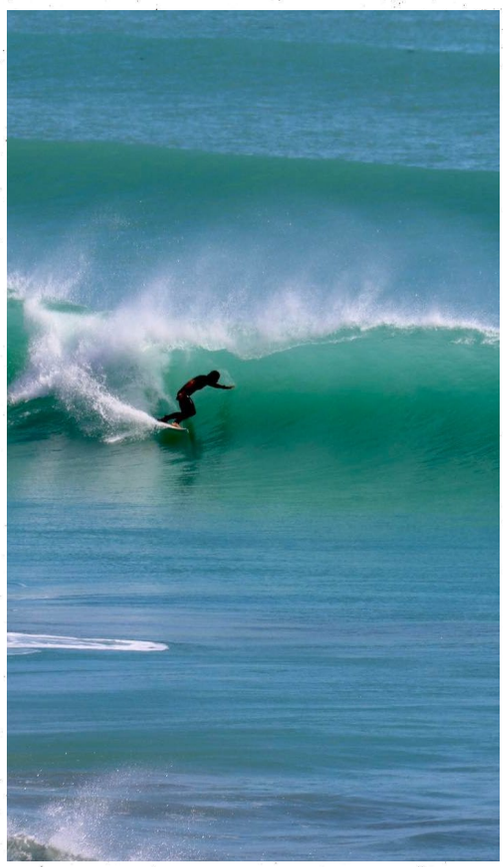


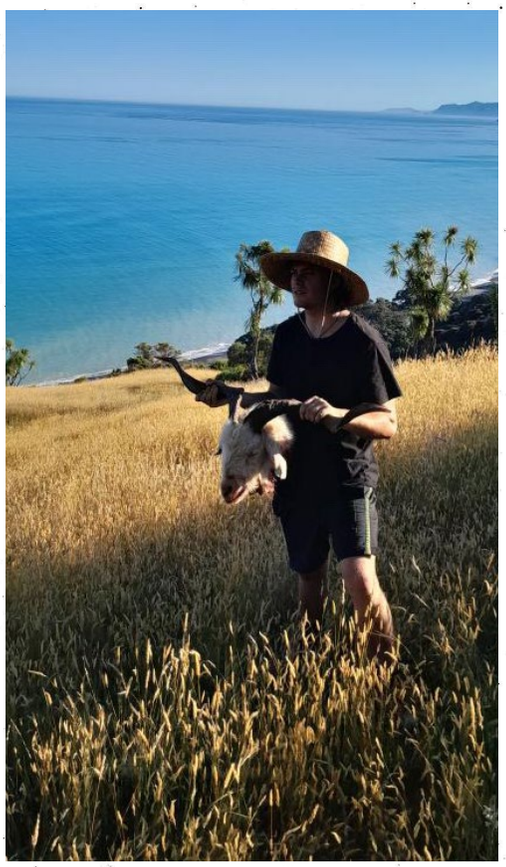


IMG.25

IMG.26

IMG.27





IMG.28

IMG.(25) Heaps of Ferns.
IMG.(26) Cyclone Swell From Round the Corner.
IMG.(27) Clifton Chimney.
IMG.(28) Hertz In a Blue One.
IMG.(29) Tosh & Ram.

Kentaro Yoshida was born and raised in a rural fishing village in Toyama, Japan. At the age of 18, he decided to move to Australia in pursuit of the English language, sunny beaches and a more balanced lifestyle. After a decade, he is now an illustrator and artist, and is currently based in the Northern Beaches of Sydney. Kentaro is passionate about both traditional and digital mediums. His pastel toned artwork has bold line-work, quirky characters, and a beach-side sense of humour. He has worked with various international brands, as well as individuals for private commissions. Kentaro also specialises in hand-painting artwork from large-scale murals, to detailed painting on fragile watercolour paper.

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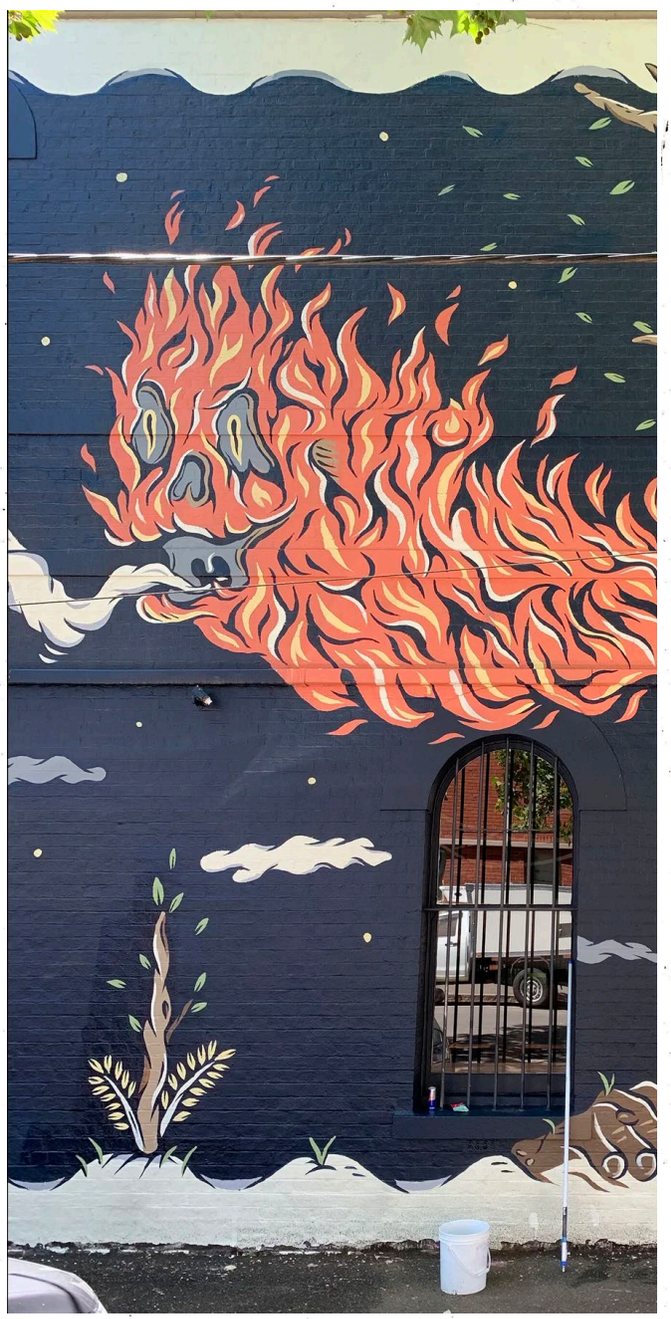
KENTARO

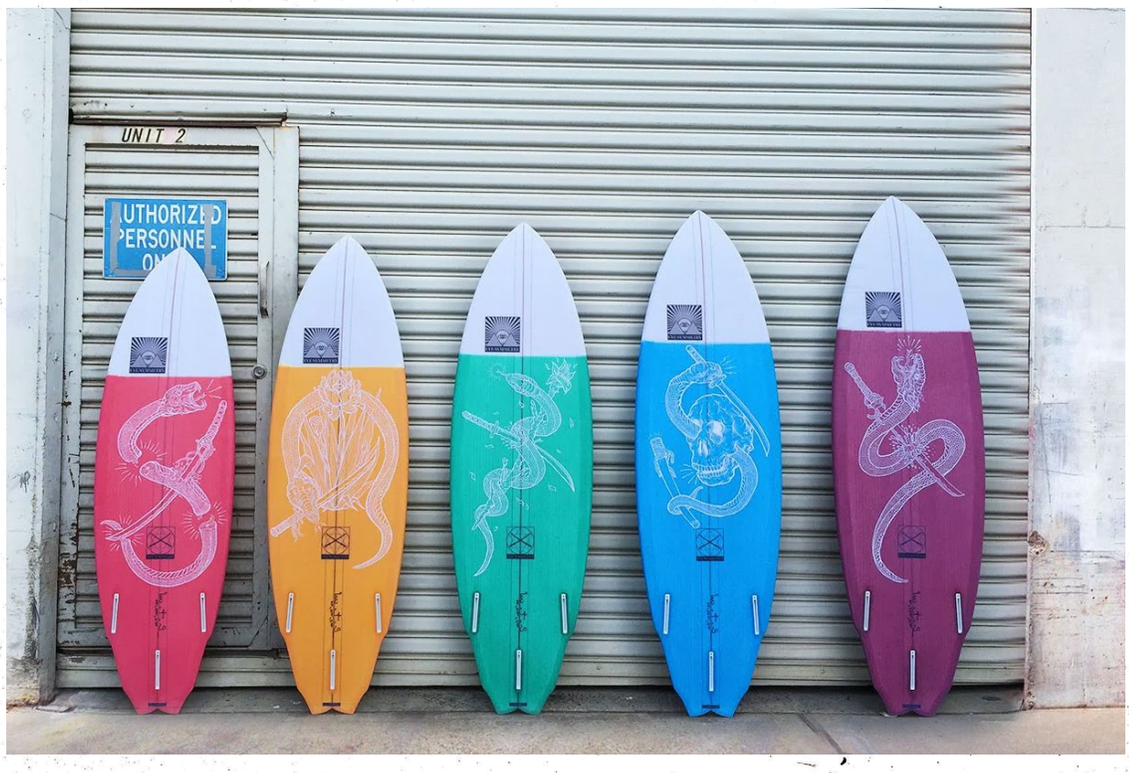


Kentaro Yoshida grew up in Japan, a kid immersed in comics like so many of his generation. “I was a massive fan of Japanese comics like any other kid,” he says. That love of manga stayed with him, even after moving to Australia at 18. There he discovered surfing, a passion that rooted him in his new home and began weaving together the dual threads of Japanese heritage and coastal lifestyle. “I’d say my work has a full mix of my lifestyle and history.”

His Japanese background is unmistakable in his illustrations. “Yep definitely,” he says. “I loved Akira Toriyama, the author of Dragon Ball, and the Japanese comic style has definitely been the basis of my work so far.” That influence blends with a broader pool of inspiration: “Akira Toriyama for Japanese comics. Jim Phillips, Jeremy Fish and Ben Brown for skate & surf art, gig posters and graphics in general.”

When it comes to collaborations; whether with bands, brands, or events, Kentaro doesn’t see much separation from his personal practice. “I think in a way I approach the same way as I still want to introduce the same motif /vibes on any commercial projects as my personal work.” That consistency keeps his work instantly recognizable. As for dream collaborations? He laughs: “Hahaha I guess there are still so many I haven’t ticked from my bucket list haha.” Inspiration for Kentaro often comes from daily life. “I like watching people on the street /pub/surf. My work just reflects my experience/observation from daily life.” And while illustration remains his primary medium, he’s curious about other directions: “Always keen for fresh work and projects, but making something 3D seems pretty fun!”

Left over page: Kenny shot by Simon Lafranchi, Solo Show shot by Rumi Matsuzawa, Undulation Show shot by Chris Grundy. Left to Right: Custom Tyre Tube, Board, Kenny in Studio, Gogyo Fitzroy Mural, BMW x Engineered to Slide, Undulation Quiver.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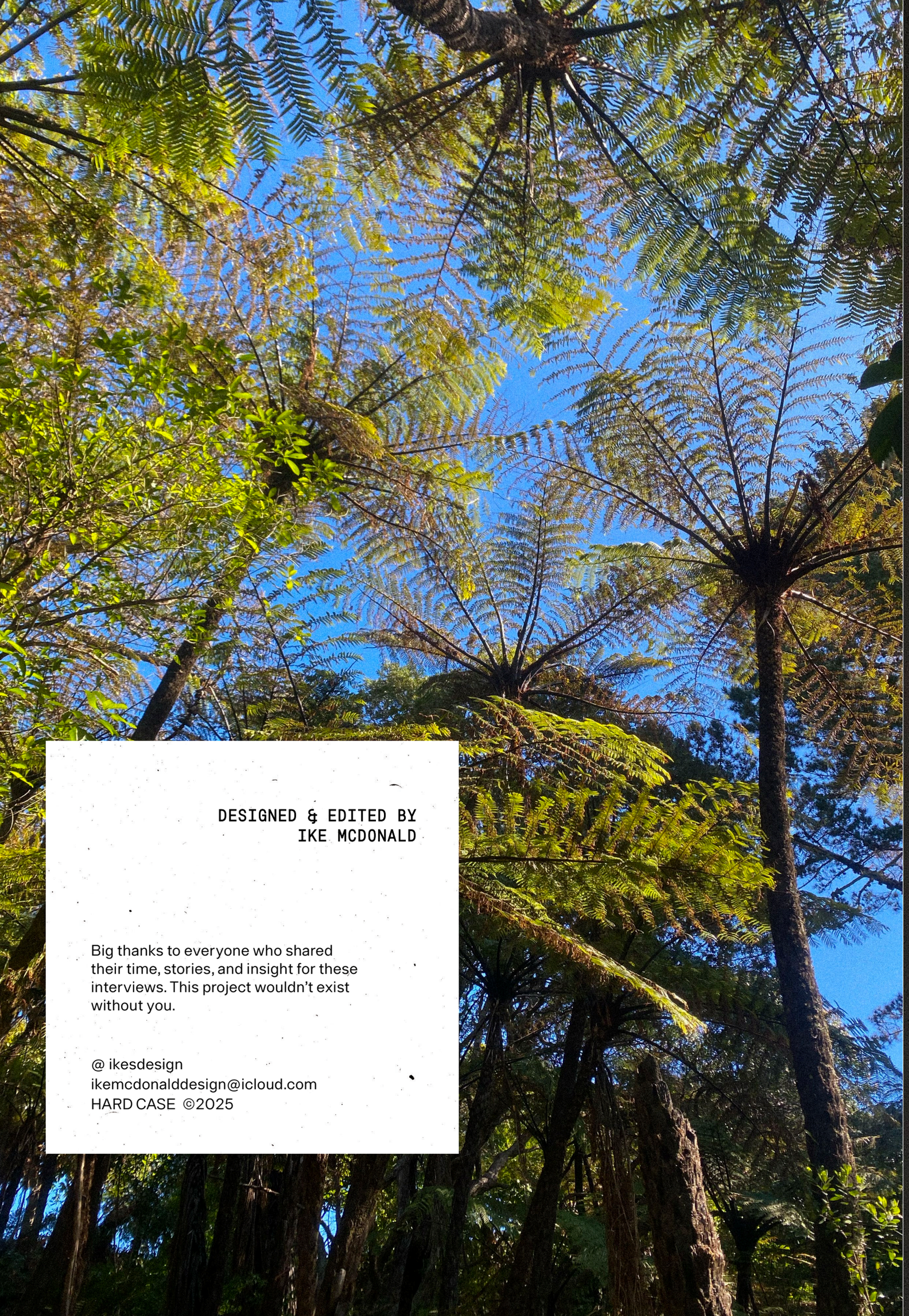
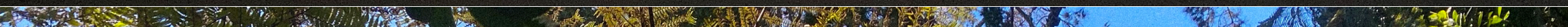


DESIGNED & EDITED BY
IKE MCDONALD

Big thanks to everyone who shared their time, stories, and insight for these interviews. This project wouldn't exist without you.

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